

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 051003Z OCT 73

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1951

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

S E C R E T GENEVA 5296

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJ: OPIUM BAN IN TURKEY

1. ARIM (TURKEY), RECENTLY RETURNED GENEVA FROM ITU CONFERENCE, TELEPHONED MISOFF OCT 4 TO DISCUSS DEVELOPMENTS ON UN NARCOTICS FRONT. IN COURSE CONVERSATION MISOFF ASKED ARIM WHETHER HE HAD SEEN RECENT PRESS ARTICLES CONCERNING STATEMENTS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY TWO LARGEST POLITICAL PARTIES IN TURKEY ON OPIUM PRODUCTION BAN. ARIM SAID HE HAD NOT SEEN THESE REPORTS BUT WOULD LOOK THEM UP.

2. AMBASSADOR KIRCA SYBSEQUENTLY TELEPHONED MISOFF AND MADE COMMENTS TO FOLLOWING EFFECT. IT IS NATURAL THAT STATEMENTS CONCERNING LIFTING OF OPIUM BAN SHOULD BE MADE BY TURKISH POLITICIANS IN HEAT OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN. HOWEVER, HE WISHED USG TO KNOW THAT IF JUSTICE PARTY WINS ELECTION, AS IS "VERY PROBABLE", WASHINGTON "CAN TAKE IT FOR SURE THAT BAN WILL CONTINUE". KIRCA SAID DEMIREL IS HIS PERSONAL FRIEND, THAT HE DISCUSSED QUESTION OF BAN WITH DEMIREL WHEN HE WAS IN ANKARA (IN AUGUST) AND "HE KNOWS WHAT HE IS SAYING". KIRCA STRESSED THAT COMMENT HE MAKING TO MISOFF, WITH REQUEST IT BE CONVEYED TO USG, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED "HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL", ADDING THAT IF THIS INFO SHOULD BECOME KNOWN DEMIREL WOULD BE PLACED IN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT POSITION.

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3. KIRCA NOTED THAT REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY HAS OFFICIALLY DECLARED THAT IF IT WINS ELECTION BAN WILL BE LIFTED AND OPIUM PRODUCTION MAINTAINED UNDER STRICT CONTROL. KIRCA SAID JUSTICE PARTY HAS MADE NO "OFFICIAL" DECLARATION

"LINKING PARTY'S FUTURE ACTION TO LIFTING OF BAN". ADDED
THAT SOME JUSTICE PARTY LOCAL CANDIDATES ARE MAKING
CAMPAIGN PROPAGANDA SUPPORTING LIFTING OF BAN, BUT "THIS
DOES NOT IN ANY WAY BIND THE JUSTICE PARTY'S FUTURE
DIRECTION". BASSIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 11 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, REPORTS, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973GENEVA05296
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P750014-2247
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731065/abqceexm.tel
Line Count: 62
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <05-Oct-2001 by eisnerah, 3.4.X6, (NEEDS FURTHER REVIEW)>; RELEASED <05-Dec-2001 by golinofr>; APPROVED <05-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPIUM BAN IN TURKEY
TAGS: SNAR, TU, US, ITU
To: STATE INFO ANKARA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005